

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PM-04

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2085

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MONTEVIDEO 3296

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SHUM, UY

SUBJ: REPORTED ARREST OF LEON MORELLI, ETAL.

REF: STATE 219396, MONTEVIDEO 3279

1. BY NOW DEPARTMENT IS AWARE FROM INFORMATION CONTAINED MONTEVIDEO 3279 SENT SEPT 3, WHICH APPARENTLY CROSSED WITH REFTEL, THAT LEON MORELLI, WILSON FERREIRA'S SON-IN-LAW, AND HORACIO TERRA, WERE ARRESTED IN CONNECTION WITH GOU AUTHORITIES' SEARCH FOR A TAPE WHICH HAD BEEN SENT HERE BY FERREIRA ALDUNATE. THIS REPORT WAS BASED ON INFORMATION PROVIDED THE EMBASSY BY POLITICAL ASSOCIATES HERE OF WILSON FERREIRA WHO WERE CLANDESTINELY CIRCULATING TAPE.

2. WE CAN NOW CONFIRM NOT ONLY ARREST OF THESE TWO BUT ALSO OF THE OTHER THREE PERSONS NAMED IN REFTEL. EMBASSY WILL TRANSLATE TAPE FOR REFERRAL TO DEPARTMENT. IN GENERAL, IT CONSTITUTES A REPORT BY WILSON FERREIRA ON HIS ACTIVITIES; THE GREAT DEGREE OF INTEREST HE HAS BEEN ABLE TO AROUSE IN OTHER COUNTRIES, AND ESPECIALLY IN THE U.S.; AND IDEA FOR ESTABLISHING A PERMANENT OFFICE IN WASHINGTON; AND, IN GENERAL, A DENUNCIATION OF THE CURRENT GOU, WHICH IS CHARGED WITH POLITICAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS ATROCITIES AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR MURDER OF URUGUAYANS IN ARGENTINA.

3. REFTEL REQUESTS ONLY THAT EMBASSY ASK URUGUAYAN AUTHORITIES FOR
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INFORMATION. IS IT THE DEPARTMENT'S WISH THAT THE EMBASSY SEEK SUCH

INFORMATION DIRECTLY FROM AN AUTHORITY, SUCH AS THE FONMINISTER, AND, IF SO, PRECISELY WHAT KIND OF INFORMATION SHOULD BE SOUGHT BEYOND THAT WE ALREADY HAVE?. I APPRECIATE FACT THAT MERELY MAKING SUCH A REQUEST SIGNALS USG

INTEREST AND MAY HAVE SOME SALUATORY EFFECT. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE DEPARTMENT DOUBTLESS APPRECIATES SENSITIVITY OF MAKING INQUIRY OF A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT CONCERNING ITS OWN CITIZENS WHO ARE UNDER ARREST.

WERE I TO GO BEYOND A SIMPLE INQUIRY AND MAKE SOME FORM OF REPRESENTATION IT COULD WELL BE CONSIDERED INTERVENTION IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS. IN THIS RESPECT, SINCE SUCH INQUIRY WOULD RELATE TO SEPCIFIC INDIVIDUALS, SUCH A DISTINCTION COULD WELL BE DRAWN BETWEEN IT AND THE FORCEFUL REPRESENTATIONS WHICH I HAVE MADE ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS ON THE QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN GENERAL. FROM PREVIOUS EMBASSY REPORTING, THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE THAT FIRST SECRETARY OF THE NUNCIATURA, MONSENIOR GUY SAINT-HILAIRE, WHO HAD BEEN CHARGE FOR A NUMBER OF WEEKS PRIOR TO THE INCIDENT, WAS PUBLICLY DENOUNCED BY THE GOU FOR INTERVENTION WHEN HE REQUESTED OF THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE THE RELEASE OF THE FORMER SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF URUGUAY, JOSE LUIS MASSERA. IN THIS CASE, THE GOU CAME VERY CLOSE TO DECLARING SAINT-HILAIRE PERSONA

NON GRATA, BUT THE INCIDENT WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS PREMATURE DEPARTURE FROM URUGUAY VERY SHORTLY THEREAFTER. I AM RECALLING THIS TO DEPARTMENT'S ATTENTION AS IT MIGHT WISH TO BEAR THESE FACTORS IN MIND IN CONSIDERING WHAT IT MIGHT WISH ME TO DO BEYOND ASKING FOR THAT INFORMATION WHICH WE ALREADY HAVE.

4. WE ASSUME THAT ARREST ACTION OF THIS KIND, GIVEN THE FOREIGN INTEREST IN WILSON FERREIRA AND HIS POWERFUL CONNECTIONS, MIGHT WELL HAVE BEEN CONTROVERSIAL IN THE GOU. WE CONSIDER IT HIGHLY UNLIKELY IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT DETAINEES WOULD BE MISTREATED.

5. I WILL AWAIT FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS RE SUCH SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL ACTION THAT MAY BE DESIRED.
SIRACUSA

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